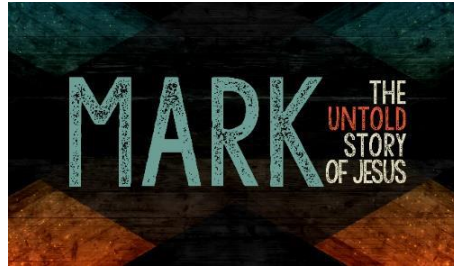


Series - Mark: The Untold Story of Jesus

Week 28: Dragging the Dark Into the Light

Passage: Mark 9:14-29



Conversation Starter:

At center stage of this passage we see Jesus confronting both the unseen demonic forces, “the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Eph 6:12), as well as *faith* (true belief) in God, the point at which humans intersect between God’s Kingdom and the kingdom of darkness. The struggle against evil as well as the struggle of faith is evident in the quarreling between the scribes and the Lord’s disciples. The father of the boy with an unclean spirit explained that the disciples were unable to cast out the demon, which also gives a clue as to what the scribes were chiding them about. Then comes the Lord’s rebuke, “O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you?”

Jesus rebuked faithlessness, or lack of faith. Was his rebuke directed at the scribes, the disciples, or the generation at large?

The father of the boy is to be commended for crying out to Jesus his confession, “I believe; help my unbelief!” Dwain stated that faith, or *true belief*, has the following characteristics:

- Always aware of how inadequate it is
- Is not casual about evil
- Has not confidence in the autonomous self
- Is unconditionally open to God

On these four points, which areas do you struggle with and why? How have you cried out to the Lord in your struggle with faith and your struggle against evil (be it natural, personal, or personified evil)?

Jesus brings about resurrection in the face of evil for those who believe. His goal for his followers is to raise us up and not to knock us down. In the sixth chapter of Mark, we saw that Jesus had sent out the twelve disciples and that they had “cast out many demons”. After this great success, however, we now find that they were unable to cast this particular demon out.

What do you think had changed between then and now? Does the passage indicate the reason for their inability to cast out this demon? How did Jesus respond to His disciples later in private?

Dwain mentioned that believing prayer is Jesus’ gift, to bridge our human frailty to His awesomeness.

Take some time now to pray the following:

- Pray for a belief that is deep & true,
- Pray against the lie of the sufficient autonomous self,
- Pray against the fear that denies evil; and forgets Jesus,
- Pray for Jesus’ resurrection power to be revealed – Big Time!

Resources to dig deeper: *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S Lewis